



News Release

\$1 Million Grant to Spur Academic/Community Outreach for Morehouse College Martin Luther King Jr. Collection

Endowed grant to support core program goals

ATLANTA, July 29, 2008 — The prestigious 10,000-piece Morehouse College Martin Luther King Jr. Collection has received yet another significant gift. This time, the Ford Foundation is donating \$1 million to support academic programming and community outreach activities around the collection.

The grant will provide Morehouse the support it needs to implement an aggressive set of programming initiatives related to the papers. Some of those programs include: training and ongoing support for Morehouse faculty, directors of institutes, centers and academic programs in using the Collection as a resource for developing course related materials; training and mentoring of Atlanta area middle and high school teachers to develop curriculum and educational materials related to the collection; convening of a biennial symposium where researchers, authors and scholars would present and share their most recent scholarship coming out of the exploration of the Collection and other repositories of Dr. Martin Luther King's personal and public papers; and an annual publication -- showcasing the creative uses of the collection. Robert Franklin, president of Morehouse College said the goals of the Foundation grant are in line with the College's plans for programming around the collection.

"Our visions—the Foundation's, the College's, and certainly Dr. King's—are synchronous, and we are both proud and fortunate to be in partnership with a world leader in strategic philanthropy," said Robert M. Franklin, president of Morehouse. "This support will enable the Morehouse College Martin Luther King Jr. Collection to expand programming, research, and outreach activities in substantive and innovative ways."

The Collection, which spans 1946 to 1968 and includes 10,000 pieces of King's personal documents, notes, speeches and personal library, was acquired by Morehouse College in 2006. Approximately 7,000 pieces of the collection are handwritten items including an early draft of the famous "I Have a Dream" speech, the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize lecture and a sermon box, which contained nearly 100 handwritten sermons from the 1950s and 1960s.

A group of Atlanta business and civic leaders, led by Mayor Shirley Franklin, raised \$32 million to purchase the Collection just before it was to have gone up for auction at Sotheby's in 2006. The deal brought the Collection home to Atlanta, the cradle of the Civil Rights movement and King's birthplace. It was the wishes of the King Estate that the Collection be donated to Morehouse, where King graduated in 1948.

The Collection is stored at the Robert W. Woodruff Library where it is being digitized and archived. The Collection is scheduled to be available for scholarly access in fall of 2008.

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